

Message Text

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FOL TEL SENT SECSTATE INFO ALGIERS, MOSCOW, TEL AVIV, TRIPOLI,
TUNIS FROM PARIS APRIL 26 TH:

QUOTE: PARIS 11487

E. O. 11652: N/ A (DECONTROL 12/31/75)

TAGS: MASS, EG, LY, FR

SUBJ: LIBYAN MIRAGE TRANSFER

REF: PARIS 11305

1. SUMMARY: ISRAELIS AND THEIR FRIENDS CONTINUE TO KEEP HEAT
ON GOF ON SUBJECT OF LIBYAN MIRAGE TRANSFER. IN EVENT OF
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MIDDLE EAST POLICY
INCLUDING ARMS SUPPLY TO LIBYA LIKELY TO FIGURE PROMINENTLY.
END SUMMARY.

2. ON HIS RETURN APRIL 25 FROM PERIOD OF CONSULTATIONS IN TEL AVIV,
ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE BEN NATAN STATED THAT LIBYA HAD
TRANSFERRED 18 OF ITS MIRAGE FIGHTERS TO AN EGYPTIAN MILITARY
AIRFIELD. ISRAEL, HE SAID, HAD PROOF THAT THE NECESSARY
INFRASTRUCTURE ON GROUND AND INDISPENSABLE MATERIAL FOR
CONTROLLING AND GUIDING THE MIRAGES IN FLIGHT HAD ALREADY BEEN
INSTALLD IN EGYPTIAN TERRITORY. BEN NATAN ADDED THAT SILENCE
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OF LIBYAN AND EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENTS IN FACE OF ISRAELI STATEMENTS

WAS ADDITIONAL PROOF OF THE CORRECTNESS OF THEIR INFORMATION.

3. MEMBERS OF OPPOSITION CENTRIST GROUPS IN FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HAVE ALSO TAKEN UP THIS ISSUE. GENERAL PAUL STEHLIN, REFORMIST DEPUTY FROM PARIS, HAS SUBMITTED WRITTEN QUESTION TO PRIME MINISTER IN WHICH HE ASKED WHETHER INFORMATION ABOUT MIRAGE TRANSFERS TO EGYPT CORRECT. HE ALSO ASKS HOW GOF PROPOSED TO RESPECT UNDERTAKING THAT IN NO CASE WOULD MIRAGES BE PUT AT DISPOSITION OF "BATTLEFIELD" COUNTRIES IN ARAB WORLD. RADICAL PARTY DEPUTY SERVAN-SCHREIBER HAS ALSO CRITICIZED FRENCH MIDDLE EAST POLICY SAYING THAT KEEPING ISRAEL "ALMOST IN QUARANTINE" HAS IMPEDED ALL EUROPEAN POLICY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. IN HIS VIEW, WHAT IS CALLED FOR IS MORE ACTIVE EUROPEAN POLICY, RATHER THAN LEAVING PROBLEM TO SUPERPOWERS.

4. COMMENT: IN VIEW CONTINUING ATTENTION TO POSSIBLE TRANSFER, THERE IS GROWING EXPECTATION THAT FRENCH GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO MAKE FURTHER STATEMENT ON SUBJECT OF TRANSFER. ONE POSSIBLE FORUM FOR SUCH A STATEMENT WOULD BE IF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY HOLDS FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEBATE, IN WHICH CENTRIST DEPUTIES AT VERY LEAST WOULD RAISE FRENCH MIDDLE EAST POLICY INCLUDING ARMS SUPPLY. IN ADDITION, FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT IS MEETING WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF ASSEMBLY APRIL 26 AND ISSUE OF MIRAGES IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO COME UP. IRWIN UNQUOTE ROGERS

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